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The Use of Recreational Drugs and Alcohol in College

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Intro

Our topic was about the use of alcohol and recreational drugs in college, and how people viewed it toward themselves and how they viewed others using it. We also wanted to discover whether or not they thought it affected not only their mental health, but others mental health.

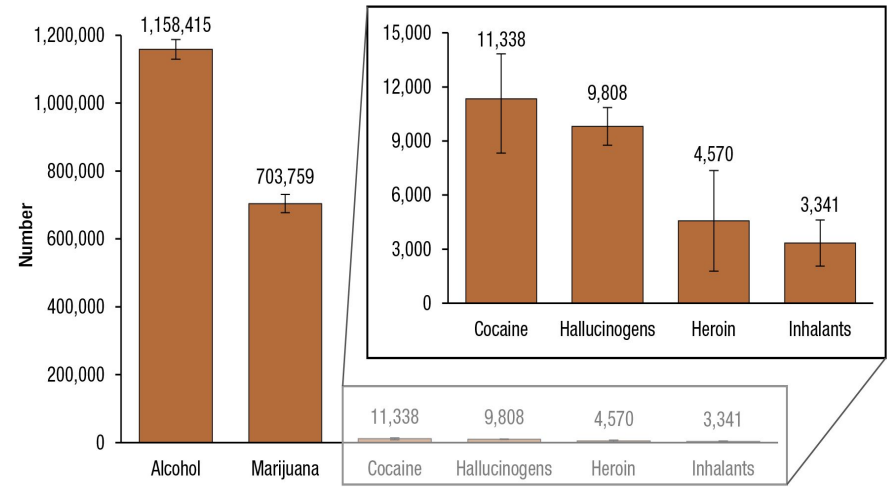
Why we chose this topic

In the time we have spent in college so far, we have noticed that many students seem to be constantly battling feelings of stress, depression, and anxiety. We also noticed that many students participate in the use and abuse of illegal (or prescribed) drugs and alcohol. Our mission is to discover if there is a correlation between the two!

Background

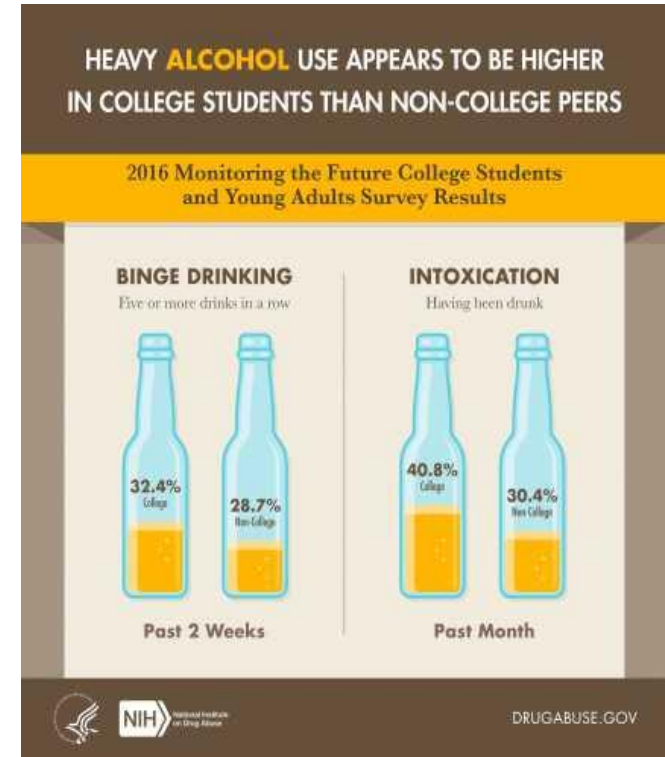
- College students make up one of the largest groups of alcohol and recreational drug users nationwide.
- The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism found that four out of five college students drink alcohol, while three out of four of these same students are under the legal drinking age.

The following graphs shows a number of full-time college students (18-24) who used alcohol or illicit drugs for the first time on an average day.



Cont.

- It was found by the Anxiety and Depression Association of America that substance abuse and mental health disorders often go hand in hand. According to their report, “About 20 percent of Americans with an anxiety or mood disorder, such as depression, also have a substance abuse disorder, and about 20 percent of those with a substance abuse problem also have an anxiety or mood disorder.”
- According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse, “Compared with the general population, people addicted to drugs are roughly twice as likely to develop mood and anxiety disorders, and vice versa..”



Methods

- Personal Interviews
- Conversations
- Surveys



Research results

- Many different people, many different views.
- Some considered it a “waste of time and a waste of money”
- Definitely seen as a coping mechanism
- “Easily accessible” (also depends on student’s community/background/class)

Interview Questions

What do you think about the use of alcohol and recreational drugs?

How often do you think students at Parkland are involved with drugs and alcohol?

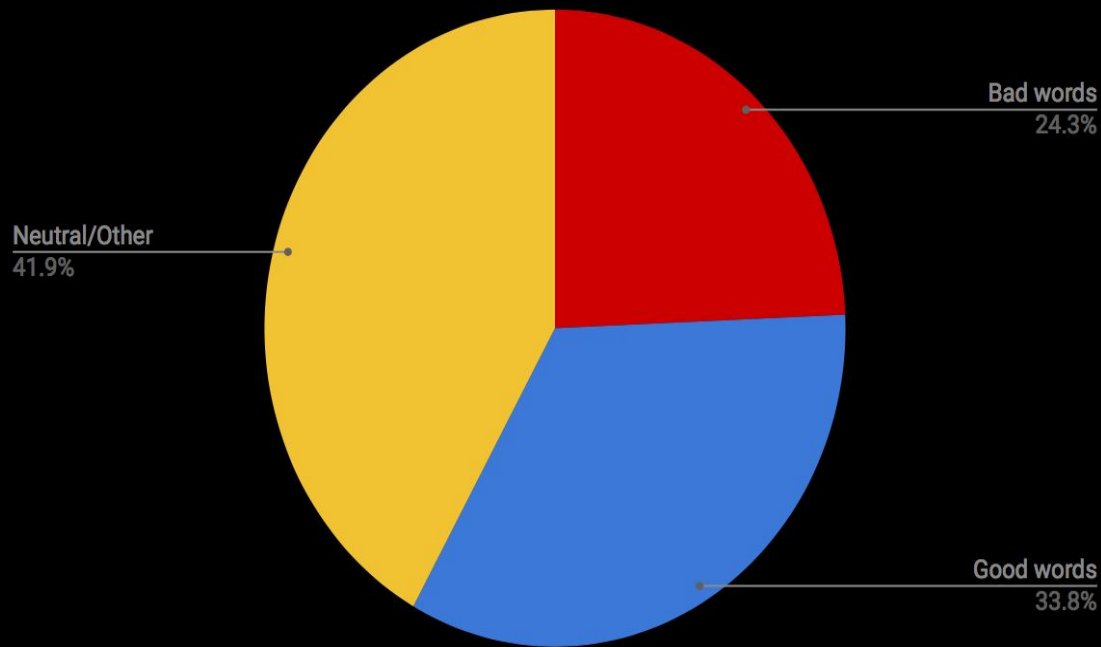
Do you think drugs and alcohol affect people's mental health?

Interviewee 1: "I do think recreational drugs and alcohol can affect people's mental health. Some people might use it as an escape, and it can make it worse for those who suffer from mental illness."

"I think almost everyone who attends Parkland does or at least has done drugs and alcohol. I know people who are involved with it heavy and people who don't even like think about. It just depends on the person and how they feel about these type of things, but I honestly don't think that it's a bad thing [if you do] though."

Surveys

Words Associated with Drugs and Alcohol



Sources

- Graph: SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Surveys on Drug Use and Health (NSDUHs), 2011 and 2014.
- https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/report_2361/ShortReport-2361.html
- <https://www.addictioncenter.com/college/>
- <https://www.everydayhealth.com/depression/depression-and-substance-abuse.aspx>